



## **Paid Sick Leave for Survivors of Sexual and Domestic Violence**

### **What are Paid Sick and Safe Days**

Paid sick and safe days would permit survivors to take time off of work to address the health consequences of violence and manage other critical safety needs such as going to court, moving into shelter, relocating to a safer home, seeking medical treatment, filing for an order of protection or working with law enforcement, without compromising their economic stability or personal safety.

### **Economic Security and the Workplace**

Any workplace can be affected by violence. Employees who are survivors may need workplace supports to help keep themselves and their co-workers safe and productive:

- More than 12 million women and men suffer from domestic violence, sexual violence or stalking by intimate partners every year in the United States.<sup>1</sup>
- In 2000, 36% of rape/sexual assault victims lost more than 10 days of work after their victimization.<sup>2</sup>
- Domestic violence survivors cumulatively miss nearly 8 million days of work.<sup>3</sup> Ninety-six percent of domestic violence victims report having problems at work, and up to half have lost a job due, at least in part, to domestic violence.<sup>4</sup>
- The economic impact reaches beyond the individual survivors and their families as, each year, domestic violence costs U.S. employers up to \$13 billion.<sup>5</sup> The National Institute of Justice estimates that employers pay almost \$5 billion annually for traditional crimes of violence, including rape, assault, and murder. This estimate excludes costs related to sick leave and disability insurance costs.<sup>6</sup>

### **The Connection Between Personal and Economic Security**

- Personal safety and economic security are inextricably linked for survivors of sexual and domestic violence. For many survivors, concerns over their ability to provide financially for themselves and their children are a significant reason for staying in or returning to an abusive relationship.
- Even after a survivor has left the abusive partner credit scores, sporadic employment histories and legal issues caused by the violence may also make it extremely difficult to pursue long-term economic security while staying safe.
- When survivors of violence have stable access to resources that help them build economic resiliency – including policies like paid sick and safe days – they and their families are much more likely to remain safe and secure.

---

<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2014). Understanding Intimate Partner Violence: Fact Sheet. Retrieved 12 May 2014, from <http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/ipv-factsheet.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Workplaces Respond to Sexual and Domestic Violence (2015). Retrieved 15 September 2015, from <http://www.workplacesrespond.org/learn/the-facts/the-costs-of-sexual-violence>

<sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2013, December 24). Intimate Partner Violence: Consequences. Retrieved 12 May 2014, from <http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/intimatepartnerviolence/consequences.html>

<sup>4</sup> Lloyd, S. & Taluc, N. (1999). The effect of male violence on female employment. *Violence Against Women*, 5(4), 370-92. Available from <http://vaw.sagepub.com/content/5/4/370.short?rss=1&ssource=mfc>

<sup>5</sup> National Network to End Domestic Violence (2014). NNEDV Calls on Congress to Pass Paid Sick Days for Survivors. Retrieved 10 June 2015, from <http://nnedv.org/news/4431-nnedv-calls-on-congress-to-pass-paid-sick-days-for-survivors.html?highlight=WyJzaWNrIlI0=>

<sup>6</sup> Workplaces Respond to Sexual and Domestic Violence (2015). Retrieved 15 September 2015, from <http://www.workplacesrespond.org/learn/the-facts/the-costs-of-sexual-violence>